

Underline: 'Clay Station' by Assemble and Matthew Raw, 2017 - Ongoing

WHAT

Established in 2015, *Underline* is a series of art and music commissions by Art on The Underground for the Victoria line. Titled *Clay Station*, this work was collaboratively developed by design studio Assemble and artist Matthew Raw for an empty shop unit at Seven Sisters Underground Station. The project involved the creation of more than a thousand unique hand-made tiles, building on London Underground's rich heritage of ceramics. It was realised with the support of two apprentices who received clay induction training and hands-on making experience with the artist as part of a traineeship with Art on The Underground, A New Direction and Create Jobs.

WHO

[Matthew Raw](#) is a ceramic artist who explores the physical and communicative properties of the tile, using textures, colour and language to tell stories of people and place. Matthew completed the prestigious ceramics residency at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 2015, in addition to winning a Jerwood Makers Award in 2014. He has been commissioned to develop a large, tiled mural for Coventry's UK City of Culture 2021.

[Assemble](#) is a multi-disciplinary collective working across architecture, design, and art, founded in 2010. It has delivered a diverse award-winning body of work, whilst retaining a democratic and co-operative method that enables built, social and research-based work at a variety of scales.



Clay Station, Assemble & Matthew Raw, Seven Sisters station, 2017. Photography by Guy G. Archard.



Clay Station, Assemble & Matthew Raw, Seven Sisters station, 2017. Photography by Guy G. Archard.

[Art on the Underground](#) commissions international artists to create works of art for London's Underground that are seen by millions of people each day. Incorporating a range of artistic media, it produces critically acclaimed projects that are accessible to all and which draw together London's diverse communities.

A New Direction is an award winning non-profit organisation working to enhance the capacity and agency of children and young people in London to own their creativity, shape culture, and achieve their creative potential.

Create Jobs is an employability programme for young Londoners which is transforming London's workforce by supporting and developing individuals who are underrepresented in the creative and digital industries.

WHERE

Seven Sisters Underground Station, North London

WHY

The project was intended to invite residents to use the station, to create appreciation of this civic space, and to celebrate the history of ceramics in London Underground stations.

HOW

- *Clay Station* was realised with funding from Art on the Underground's core budget.
- The project ran for two years, from initiation to installation.

IMPACT

- *Clay Station* created an aesthetically inviting facade for this formerly disused shop unit at the station and provided two new paid traineeships for young people with no experience in the creative industries.
- The project rebuilt a former shop unit that was derelict, returning it to function as a café and providing employment opportunities for the area.
- TfL provided peppercorn rent to allow the café business to get established and to support local businesses.

- Throughout the production period, workshops were held for local community groups, enabling them to participate in the design process, and providing a sense of pride and ownership over the space and area.

"Trainees were exposed to a range of processes, and were based in an environment where there were a lot of other art based activities going on, so hopefully that was a stimulating experience. They seemed to pick up skills quickly, and became very useful members of the production team." - Adam, Assemble

"I have gained a number of different opportunities to connect with other people and other programmes / learning activities." - Trainee, Assemble

"When we opened people were very happy to have the kiosk regenerated and to have a high profile 'living' artwork for Seven Sisters. It was like a gift for the local community. The two things go well together: great coffee, great artwork." - Guido Gessa, manager of Coffee on the Run, station kiosk

"It is great to get the opportunity to work within the context of the London Underground which has such a rich design heritage, especially when it comes to tiles. Even though the unit at Seven Sisters is small, we think that with a little bit of love, the intervention will have a huge impact on the space, and how it is perceived and used."

- MAT LEUNG, ASSEMBLE